

Application No. 09/886,693
Amendment "A" dated September 16, 2004
Reply to Office Action mailed August 4, 2004

REMARKS

Applicants express appreciation to the Examiner for the courtesy of the recent interview granted to Applicants' attorney. The claim amendments made by this paper are consistent with the proposed claim amendments presented during the course of the Interview held September 14, 2004.

The Office Action, mailed August 4, 2004, considered claims 1-25. Claims 1-3, 16-18, 23 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kondo (U.S. Patent No. 5,193,003). Claims 4-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kondo in view of Boyce (U.S. Patent No. 6,563,876)¹ and claim 19-22 and 24 were found to be allowed.

By this paper, claims 1-18, 23 and 25 have been cancelled² and new claims 26-29 have been added, such that claims 19-22, 24³ and 26-29 remain pending.

As discussed during the interview, the new claims 26-29 comprise complementary computer program product claims corresponding to the allowed method claims 19-22, and incorporate all of the same limitations.

Accordingly, following this paper, all of the pending claims 19-22, 24 and 26-29 comprise allowable subject matter, as reflected in the interview summary.

¹ Although the prior art status of the cited art is not being challenged at this time, Applicants reserve the right to challenge the prior art status of the cited art at any appropriate time, should it arise. Accordingly, any amendments, including claim cancellations, made herein should not be construed as acquiescing to any prior art status of the cited art.

² The amendments made herein, including the cancellation of claims 26-34 should not, however, be construed as acquiescing to the purported teachings of the prior art of record. Instead, Applicants are making these amendments and cancellations to expedite prosecution of the allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants reserve the right to pursue the cancelled subject matter and to challenge the purported teachings and status of the prior art at any appropriate time, should it arise. In fact, as discussed during the interview, it is the Applicants intent to pursue some of the cancelled claims in a continuation.

³ It was clarified during the interview that claim 24 is allowable, even though this was not explicitly stated in the Office Action due to a mere oversight.

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In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 16 day of September 2004.

Respectfully submitted,



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